U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs

Office of Information & Technology

Annual Report FY 2010

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ERIC K. SHINSEKI
Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs

Message from the Chief Information Officer

CIO Strategic Priorities

   Customer Service

   Next Generation Information Security

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   Product Delivery

   Fiscal Management

ROGER W. BAKER
Chief Information Officer
Department of Veterans Affairs

The vision for this annual report is to serve as a working document for all OI&T employees and to serve as a source of information for Department-wide leadership. Beginning with my strategic priorities we can all reflect on how we each contribute to those specific areas. Secretary Shinseki's 16 major transformational initiatives are identified so that we may also reflect how, as OI&T employees, we contribute to the overall strategic goals and objectives of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

   Sharing this single page will provide all employees the necessary insight to understand what is most important and how we support those initiatives and priorities. 2010 was filled with a great deal of good news, which we will share throughout this report. I am proud and humbled from interacting with many of our employees in the field supporting health care, benefits, interment, and the myriad of customers facing services we provide every hour of every day.

   Before the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs on October 6, 2010, I testified
   "while we have made many significant improvements and had many successes over the last 16 months, we have only just begun down the path that we must follow to achieve our ultimate goal of a 21st century VA."

   What this denotes in the purest sense is that we are pivotal at bringing and sustaining innovative services to Veterans and their families. We must continuously renew our commitment to sustaining our strengths and overcoming obstacles and challenges.

Figure 1.

OI&T strategic priorities (blue circle) reflect how we contribute to each of Secretary Shinseki's 16 major transformational initiatives (white circle) and how we contribute to the overall strategic goals and objectives of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).
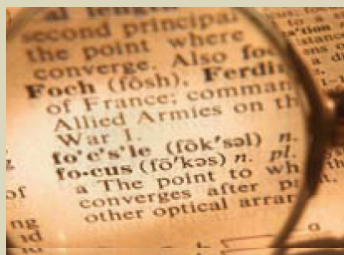
Section I.

Priorities and Major Initiatives

A. CIO Strategic Priorities.

The purpose of the five priorities is to provide vision to the Office of Information and Technology in order to accomplish our primary mission and support the sixteen initiatives identified by Secretary Shinseki. We utilize these strategic priorities to guide our daily activities and account for performance. As you can see from the diagram (Figure 1), our strategic priorities impact all sixteen major initiatives.

The CIO refocused the IT mission on 5 strategic priorities to successfully provide the timely IT services and programs our Nation's Veterans deserve and to directly support the 16 VA strategic initiatives. These priorities mirror and support the Secretary's vision to transform VA to become a 21st century organization that is people-centric, results-driven, and forward thinking and, as the CIO emphasizes, will create an environment where OI&T will be able to "track every project and every dollar and make sure each project is on schedule, track metrics, increase visibility into security, have better privacy for Veterans, and work more closely with the administration as our customers."

1. Customer Service

The most dramatic change at VA has been in the relationship between OI&T and the Administrations (Veterans Health, Veterans Benefits, and National Cemetery). With the Under Secretaries, and with the continuous support of Secretary Shinseki, we have set a tone of cooperation that has made it possible for us to effectively address many difficult problems at the second largest department in the Federal government. As an example, the successful delivery of the new GI Bill long-term processing solution was clearly an intense cooperative venture between OI&T and the Veterans

Secretary's Initiatives / VHA / OI&T / VBA / NCA

Benefits Administration (VBA). Whenever asked by the Secretary about an issue or a success regarding the GI Bill, our team's answer consistently starts with "we." We built the system as a team, and we delivered the system as a team. This relationship is the single largest contributing factor to what is, for VA, a stunning victory and reversal of past practices—the successful installation of the GI Bill system on schedule in March of this year, and the complete conversion of all GI Bill processing to this system next August.

2. Next Generation Information Security

The VA IT enterprise is massive, with 153 hospitals, 853 community-based outpatient clinics (CBOC), 57 benefits processing offices, 131 cemeteries,and 33 Soldiers' lots and monument sites on a single, consolidated network. Our mission requires that we hold Personally Identifiable Information and Personal Health Information on approximately 26 million Veterans, and that we make that information available quickly to health care providers and benefits personnel who need it to provide the most effective services to Veterans. Our network supports over 400,000 users, and over 700,000 devices.

Medical Device Isolation Architecture
(MDIA)
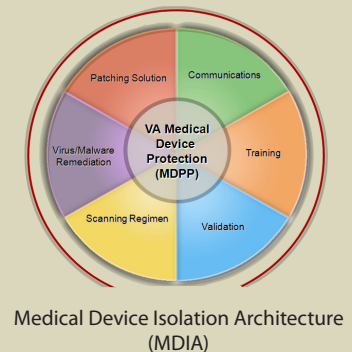
     To vastly improve our information security posture, we embarked on a project during the spring of 2010 to provide visibility to every desktop on the network by the end of the fiscal year. I am pleased to report that we achieved that goal, thanks to a lot of hard work on the part of many OI&T employees. By the end of the calendar year, we will also have achieved full implementation of our medical device isolation architecture, which is essential to mitigating security vulnerabilities in our medical devices. Finally, we will achieve full visibility to every device on our network during fiscal year 2011, putting us on par with the best managed private sector organizations. Our ability to provide immediate response to vulnerabilities and threats within our enterprise, as well as enacting a proactive approach to centralized monitoring, reporting, compliance validation and providing maximum service availability, is quickly establishing VA as a model of excellence for the rest of the Federal Government.

3. Transparent Operational Metrics

Our operations organization provides excellent service to our hospitals, benefits offices, and cemeteries. I can tell you this because, starting in my first month at VA, we began to measure and publish key metrics that tell us how we are doing. We started at the core, measuring

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network availability
(which averages 99.99
percent), Veterans Health
Information Systems and
Technology Architecture
(VistA) system availability
(99.95 percent), and
help desk wait times.
We have expanded
these measurements to
include a list of nearly 167
metrics covering aspects of our network; our service provision and our system/application
provisioning that help us understand what works well and what can be improved.
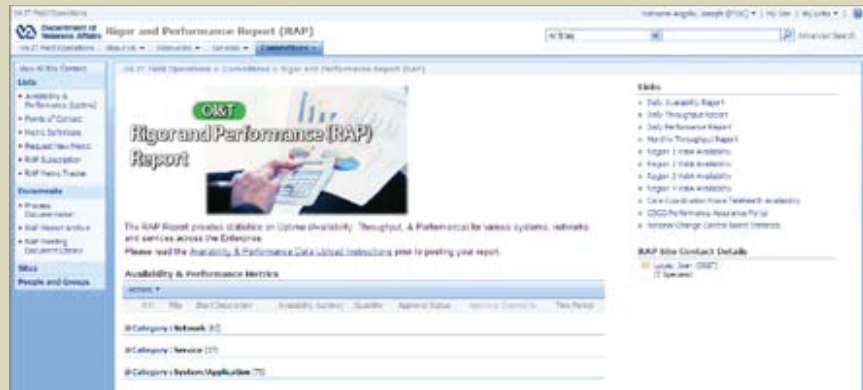
Along our customer service theme, we are now focusing on providing metrics on how
well we are doing at each individual VA facility. We will soon begin reporting key IT support
metrics at each VA facility, allowing national operations staff to work more easily and more
quickly with the facility CIO and the facility director to identify and address issues that cause
poor support. We also recently introduced a program to allow continuous monitoring of
customer satisfaction at each facility, measured in a way that lets us compare customer
satisfaction for our services versus those of similar private sector organizations. We intend
to continue to augment the reporting of metrics and automate the collection of vital
information through the implementation of an Enterprise Management Framework (EMF).
The ability to measure these key processes and adjust accordingly is central to continuous
operational improvement—a hallmark of a mature operation. Customer satisfaction is a local
issue. In an enterprise the size of VA, it is not enough to focus on the averages. We must work
to identify and address issues that affect local customer support and satisfaction, and to play
our part in ensuring that each Veteran receives the best services possible.

4. Product Delivery

To proactively manage VA's
IT projects and ensure IT
program managers have
access to the resources
and tools they need, OI&T
established a formal process
for project management. The
Project Management and
Accountability System (PMAS),
created in 2009, contributes to

PMAS Project Flow Diagram
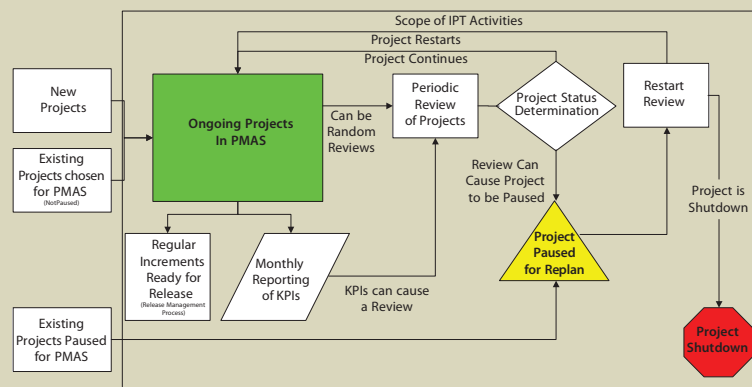
the delivery of functionality that meets IT business needs and improves VA's ability to provide benefits and services to our Nation's Veterans.

Each of the Secretary's 16 major initiatives is held to critical program standards and consists of a series of projects. Each of these projects is comprised of a series of increments held to PMAS standards. The incremental approach ensures the customer, project team, and stakeholders working on a project are aligned by a single compelling measure, delivering functionality in cycles of 6 months or less.
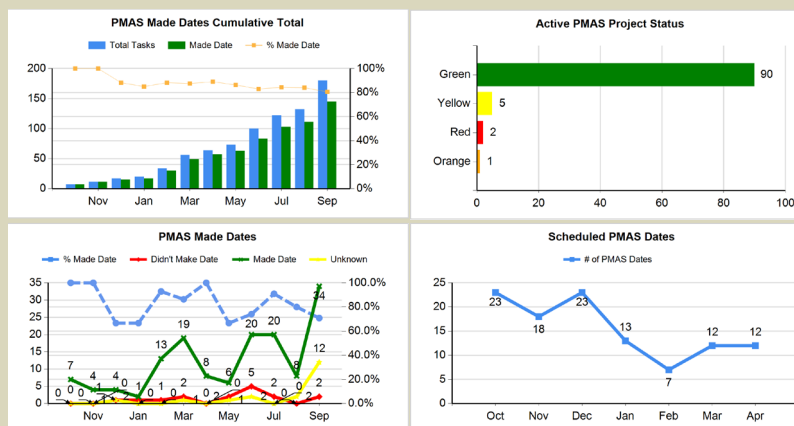
5. Fiscal Management

We created a detailed financial plan for OI&T in both 2010 and 2011, known as the Prioritized Operating Plan. This plan has two main purposes. First, it creates a vehicle for us to agree, with our customers, on what the high priority IT services and projects are, and allocate our resources to ensure success on the most important items. It also allows us to communicate, clearly and objectively, which projects and services will not be accomplished. Second, it allows us to track our expenditures, from plan to budget to spend to results, and know the business purpose for spending each dollar and then track the results we expect to obtain from the expenditure.
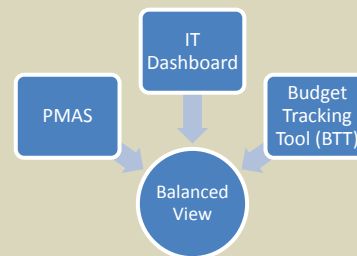
B. VA Major Transformational Initiatives

Secretary Shinseki identified 16 major initiatives to accomplish in order to completely transform the Department of Veterans Affairs. The Office of Information and Technology must

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ensure everything from our transformation at the strategic level to our daily actions at the end user level directly supports the Department-wide transformation. The comprehensive list of VA major initiatives along with their associated performance measures are located in the FY 2011-2015 Department of Veterans Affairs Strategic Plan located at: **http://www.va.gov/performance/**.

1. Eliminate Veteran Homelessness (EVH)

The Department of Veterans Affairs is taking decisive action toward its goal of ending homelessness among our nation's Veterans. VA will help Veterans acquire safe housing; needed treatment services; opportunities to return to employment; and benefits assistance. This philosophy is built upon six strategies,which the Office of Information and Technology clearly has a large supporting role: Outreach/Education, Treatment, Prevention, Housing/Supportive Services, Income/Employment/Benefits and Community Partnerships.

Performance Measure: Reduce the homeless Veteran population from a baseline of 107,000 at the beginning of FY 2010 to zero in FY 2014. FY 2012 Target: 59,000; FY 2014 Strategic Target: 0.

2. Enable 21st century benefits delivery and services (e.g., backlog reduction) (Veterans Benefits Management System -VBMS)

The VBMS Initiative will result in a world-class paperless environment for Veteran claims processing and benefits delivery across the five VBA business lines. VBMS will combine business process transformation and commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) information technology to process a veteran's claim electronically from submission to payment. OI&T's contribution to this initiative is the leveraging of technology to support the paperless environment, and protecting the Veteran's information in the electronic environment.

Performance Measure: Implement a 21st century paperless claims processing system to eliminate the disability claims backlog by 2015 and ensure no Veteran has to wait more than 125 days for a high quality decision.

3. Automate GI Bill benefits (GIBILL)

The GI Bill initiative implements the business processes and automation to provide a client-centered approach to delivering the education benefits provided under the Post-9/11 GI Bill. The complexity of this exceptionally popular program, including additional benefits for Veteran families and service members, requires a new implementation strategy, including modifications to existing processing, procedures, and IT systems. The long-term implementation strategy will result in a fully-automated claims processing IT system.

OI&T has been a very large part in making tremendous strides in delivering Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits in a timely and accurate manner. We've also made significant progress in the development and deployment of our new processing and payment system. As a result of these significant strides, VBA reported that at the end of August last year, VA processed payments for only 8,185 students for the fall 2009 semester. For the current fall term, VA processed payments for more than 135,000 students. The average time to process an enrollment certification in August 2010, was 10 days, down from 28 days one year ago.

We delivered and deployed Release 1.0 of the long-term solution (LTS) on schedule on March 31, 2010. In June and August 2010, we successfully deployed Releases 2.0 and 2.1 of the LTS. Release 2.0 allowed the complete processing of all new claims under the LTS, while Release 2.1 allowed the conversion of all previously processed records from the "Interim Solution" to the LTS. Through these deployments, we successfully converted over 500,000 Chapter 33 claimant records from our interim processing system into the LTS and are paying over 600,000 claimants from the LTS. We also added greater functionality to that originally planned for the LTS, including enabling payment of retroactive housing allowance adjustments to those individuals eligible for the increased rates in 2010; automatically generating letters to individuals to provide them better information on their benefits; and facilitating claims processing for the Fry Scholarship recipients. VA is now processing all Post-9/11 GI Bill claims in this new system, thereby replacing the interim processing system and its associated manual job aides.
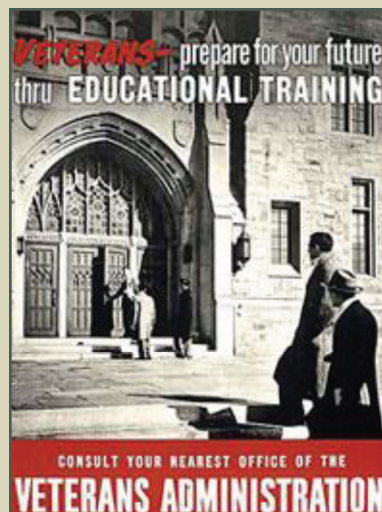
Most importantly, the new system was installed, and record conversion accomplished, with no significant errors. This meant that we were able to achieve our primary goal, which was to have the LTS installed in time to process fall semester claims without introducing processing errors or delays that might affect claims processing. The success of this roll-out is well above the industry norm.

Performance Measure: Reduce the average number of days to complete benefit claims and improve the accuracy of education claims payment processing activities.

4. Implement Virtual Lifetime Electronic Records (VLER)

The Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record (VLER) is a visionary, interagency Federal initiative, in collaboration with the private sector, to create a secure exchange for electronically sharing and proactively identifying the entire spectrum of health and benefits entitlements for our service members and veterans, and for their dependents and registered agents where applicable and appropriate, from accession through final honors. While planned to be delivered in incremental building blocks, in its end state, VLER will virtually eliminate claims processing as conducted today by proactively engaging Service members and Veterans at the point they are eligible for benefits.
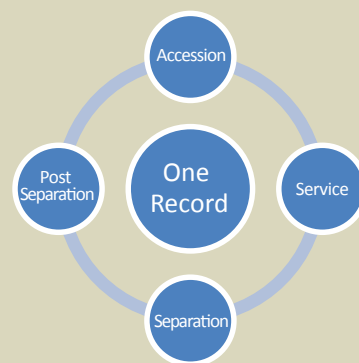
The Office of Information and Technology has made substantial progress in achieving the goals of VLER. Most visibly, we are now "live" in two pilots of the Nationwide Health Information Network in San Diego, CA and Hampton Roads in Norfolk, VA. This Nationwide Network is critical to VLER in that it will provide access to private sector records that are a large part of the lifetime of care received by Service members and Veterans.

We have also implemented a consolidated eBenefits portal where Service members and Veterans can access information on the benefits they are receiving or may be due. The eBenefits portal will eventually be the single point of entry for all benefits information. Perhaps most importantly, the eBenefits portal effectively bridges the conversion from active duty to Veteran status by allowing Service members to retain the same login information they had as an active duty participant.

Also critical to the VLER concept is the adoption by VA this past summer of the Department of Defense's (DoD) Electronic Data Interchange—Personal Identifier, or EDI-PI, as the common identifier to be included in all VA records. This ensures that, once authenticated, both VA and DoD systems will have a shared, common way of identifying all records about a single individual. Thanks to outstanding DoD cooperation, we have also agreed that DoD will provide an EDI-PI for all individuals seen by VA, even if they were not known to DoD when the Veteran served.

Performance Measure: Achieve bidirectional information exchange in at least three sites between VA, DoD, and the private sector by the end of 2011 and complete the prototyping and pilot phases by the end of FY 2012.

5. Improve Veterans Mental Health

The Improve Veteran Mental Health (IVMH) initiative is designed to transform VHA mental health service delivery. The initiative focuses on building both an IT and a programmatic infrastructure to support implementation of evidence-based treatments laid out in the *Handbook on Uniform Mental Health Services*. This improved mental health infrastructure will monitor clinical programs and provide feedback to address problems, ensure clinical services are patient centered, and address mental health needs that emerge in all medical care settings.

The Office of Information and Technology provides the expertise to assist in the development and deployment of software to plan treatments and track high risk patients and a project to support increased use of evidence-based psychopharmacology.

Performance Measures: Increase screening for alcohol misuse and depression; increase mental health and PTSD screening; and increase consistency of interval screening.

6. Build Veteran Relationship Management (VRM) Capability to Enable Convenient, Seamless Interactions

Veterans Relationship Management (VRM) is an enterprise-wide, multi-year initiative to improve veterans' secure access to health care and benefits information and assistance. VRM will modernize technology and provide VA employees with up-to-date tools to better serve Veterans and their families, and Veterans will be empowered through enhanced self-service capabilities. The Office of Information and Technology is working to support VBA through a robust project management team, executive steering committee, and a myriad of project workstreams. We are directly involved in the operations, planning, and contractual process to support the associated performance measures. Our involvement includes interface with identity services, authentication services, network based call routing, HRC call center transfers, CBO CRM expansion, eBenefits portfolio, and the measurement of customer satisfaction.

Performance Measure: Deploy VRM program by June 2012 and increase call center effectiveness as measured by the abandoned call rate.

7. Design a Veteran-Centric Health Care Model to Help Veterans Navigate the Health Care Delivery System and Receive Coordinated Care

The New Models initiative is establishing the delivery of cutting-edge, non-traditional delivery of health care to Veterans. New Models has begun transforming VA's health care system and will continue to be the driving force in redesigning future VHA clinical and business processes. In the coming years, the New Models initiative will focus on seven arenas of health care delivery, which include Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT); Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (HPDP); Virtual Medicine, non-Telehealth; Virtual Medicine, Telehealth; Non-Institutional Long Term Care; Specialty Care Pilot Projects; and Improving Access for Women Using VA Health Services.

The Office of Information and Technology is actively engaged in many of the seven New Models initiatives. Transforming to this level of delivery requires an extensive amount of bandwidth based upon the expected and actual number of users. This is an area where we must ensure all the necessary data is available to perform the required project analysis that will enable us to provide accurate feedback and meaningful collaboration with VHA.

Performance Measures: Increase American College of Physicians home builder score; Increase Census of Care Home Telehealth patients; Increase number of health promotion/disease committees in our facilities.

8. Enhance the Veteran Experience and Access to Health Care

Access to health care is vital to VA's overall mission of providing exceptional medical services to Veterans. The initiative's goal is to provide care in the right place, at the right time, by the right clinicians, in the right way. VA will continue to focus on the gaps for underserved populations and expand access so that every veteran can get the care he or she needs.

This major initiative includes seven sub- initiatives that contribute to expanding veterans' options and availability of health care services. Through the implementation of these sub-initiatives, Veterans will be able to easily navigate the VA system to receive the desired services. The Office of Information and Technology is engaged in all seven sub-initiatives. One of our critical tasks is to examine the IT solution to identify eligible Veterans for project ARCH. This specific task, like many others, requires us to onboard additional human capital. While that process is lengthy we will utilize intuitive methods to detail personnel to provide analysis of proposed solutions.

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Performance Measure: Increase percent of appointments completed and increase customer satisfaction.

9. Ensure Preparedness to Meet Emergent National Needs

VA is assigned to serve as a primary backup to the DoD Military Health Care System during war or national emergency. Additionally, VA is responsible for assisting other federal agencies and providing medical and other services during natural disasters or terrorist attacks. As part of this initiative, VA will ensure that the identification issued to employees, contractors, and affiliates meets the standards of Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12 (HSPD-12) and, in a phased approach, require the use of standard federal identification to gain physical access to federally-controlled facilities and logical access to federally-controlled information systems. The Integrated Operations Center (IOC) will facilitate critical and timely decision-making by providing situational awareness and fully coordinated recommendations to senior leadership regarding the development of potential emergencies.

The Office of Information and Technology provides the technology structure and maintenance to accomplish national emergency augmentation missions. In addition we are playing a pivotal role in accomplishing the tasks associated with HSPD-12 implementation. In regards to the IOC, we provide employees who work in the IOC and serve as a valuable sensor to any emerging threat and/or disaster.

Performance Measures: Reduce IOC response time to receive serious incident report; Implement HSPD-12 by September 30, 2011.

10. Develop Capabilities and Enabling Systems to Drive Performance and Outcomes (STDP)

The purpose of the STDP initiative is to develop a process that identifies, presents, and analyzes the most relevant cost information and metrics useful for VA management. The MPR meetings are designed to help VA's senior leadership focus on top Congressional, Presidential, and Secretarial priorities. The sessions will allow leaders to discuss mission-critical issues and program performance within the context of quantifiable performance measure results, budget execution, and workload. In sum, the MPR provides leaders with information on how well the organization is performing.

The Office of Information and Technology ensures the technology remains in place to facilitate data sharing and population of department wide data. We continue to mirror the department by holding internal MPR to gauge our progress and ensure the projects remain accountable so that all money is utilized appropriately.

Performance Measure: Implement Web-based business intelligence dashboard by FY 2012.

11. Establish Strong VA Management Infrastructure and Integrated Operating Model (IOM)

In FY 2010, VA installed the Integrated Operating Model Board (IOMB), a management structure charged with creating an environment where all six corporate functions work in cooperation to enhance cross-functional communication and collaboration. The IOMB consists of the senior leaders from each of the corporate functions and serves as the nerve center for this communication and collaboration. Meeting on a monthly basis, the IOMB brings the key senior decision-makers together to manage cross-functional dependencies and to surface and mitigate cross-functional issues and challenges.

The Office of Information and Technology has made advances within our scope by defining the necessary infrastructure to support the initiative along with initiating actions to recruit and hire along with facilitating the necessary contracted support that will compliment the VA staff.

Performance Measure: Increase OALC customer satisfaction and implement a Web based time and attendance system by FY 2013.

12. Transform Human Capital Management.
Human Capital Investment Plan (HCIP)

This initiative's goals are to improve the recruitment, hiring, and retention of VA employees; invest in people development (e.g., leadership training); support and develop the capabilities of VA Senior Executive Service (SES) Corps; and build a broad set of human resources capabilities to attract and sustain an inspired, world class workforce dedicated to serving our Nations Veterans and their families.

The Office of Information and Technology ensures that technology is in place to support this initiative; provide subject matter expertise on technology related contracts; and communicate this initiative to our IT employees to invest in their leadership and growth.

Performance Measures: Reduce hiring cycle times; increase number of managers and employees training in leadership competencies; and increase number of employees training in technical training.
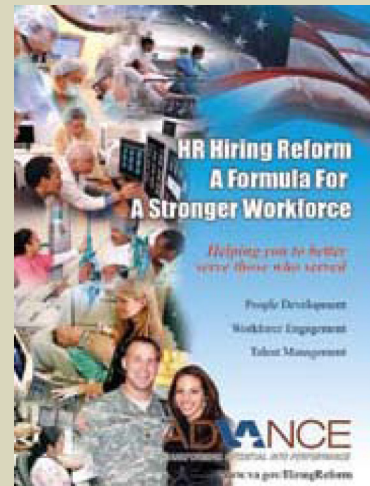
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13. Perform Research and Development to Enhance the Long-Term Health and Well-Being of Veterans

The research of Dr. Ann McKee and colleagues may lead to better treatment for an ALS-like disease

The R&D initiative has four work streams: genomic medicine, point of care research, medical informatics and information technology, and VA Central Office and field research resources.

While the Office of Information and Technology is engaged in all four work streams we have a larger role in medical informatics and information technology. VA Informatics and Computing Infrastructure (VINCI) is creating a powerful and secure environment within the Austin Information Technology Center. This environment will allow VA researchers to more easily access a wide array of VHA databases using custom and off-the-shelf analytical tools. Together, VINCI and CHIR will allow data mining to accelerate findings and identify emerging trends.

Performance Measure: Assess scientific research quality and portfolio balance and maintain broad recognition of VA research.
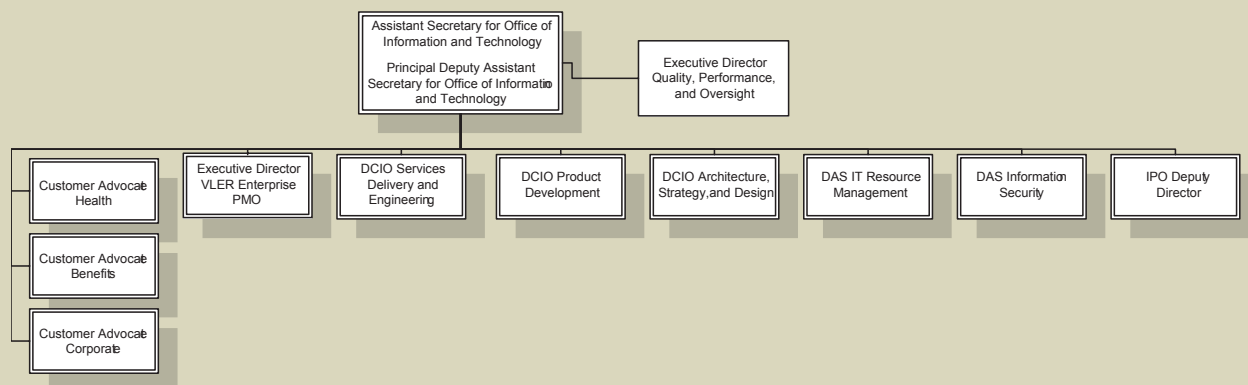
14-16. This annual reports provides data concerning the thirteen transformational initiatives of 2010. We will address initiatives 14 through 16 in our 2011 Annual Report.

Section II.

Organization

A. Organization Overview

B. Organizational Adjustments to the Office of Information and Technology

1. Structural Enhancements.

In February 2010, I briefed VA executive leadership on proposed enhancements to the structure of the IT organization based on industry best practices. Approved by Secretary Shinseki these enhancements became effective October 1, 2010. The purpose of this adjustment is to better enable OI&T to achieve the Chief Information Officer's (CIO) five major goals: improve customer service, manage projects to an outcome, provide operational

metrics, ensure information protection, and improve financial reporting. This reorganization will help evolve the OI&T business processes to reflect industry's best practices.

2. New Structural Features

These are enhancements to the existing organizational structure, which includes IT operations and infrastructure, system development, information protection and security, finance/human resources and IT enterprise architecture. The main intent is to augment the organization in several key functional areas, such as enterprise program management, customer interface and advocacy and shifting focus to enhanced customer service, field innovation and strengthening resource management through improved tracking and reporting. Specifically, this new structure will:

a. Created advocates for health, benefits, and corporate customers. This customer interface will act as an ombudsman or "Beach Master," and will advocate for IT on behalf of the customer. This will also strengthen and clarify customer interface, allowing one door for OI&T's many customers.

b. Enhance across-Departmental program oversight management through the establishment of an Enterprise Program Management Office (EPMO). The EPMO will manage Department-wide initiatives and ensure coordination between the business lines, customer advocates, and IT operations and development.

c. Transform IT operations to an organization with the primary focus on customer service delivery.

d. Reinforce CFO function which will ensure critical resource management areas are tracked, monitored, and improve timeliness for report delivery.

e. Enhance strategic planning and enterprise architecture by establishing product managers who will focus on future requirements (one-to-three years forward).

f. Create a separate organization specifically to support IT applications. This will allow greater focus and emphasis on field innovation and development.
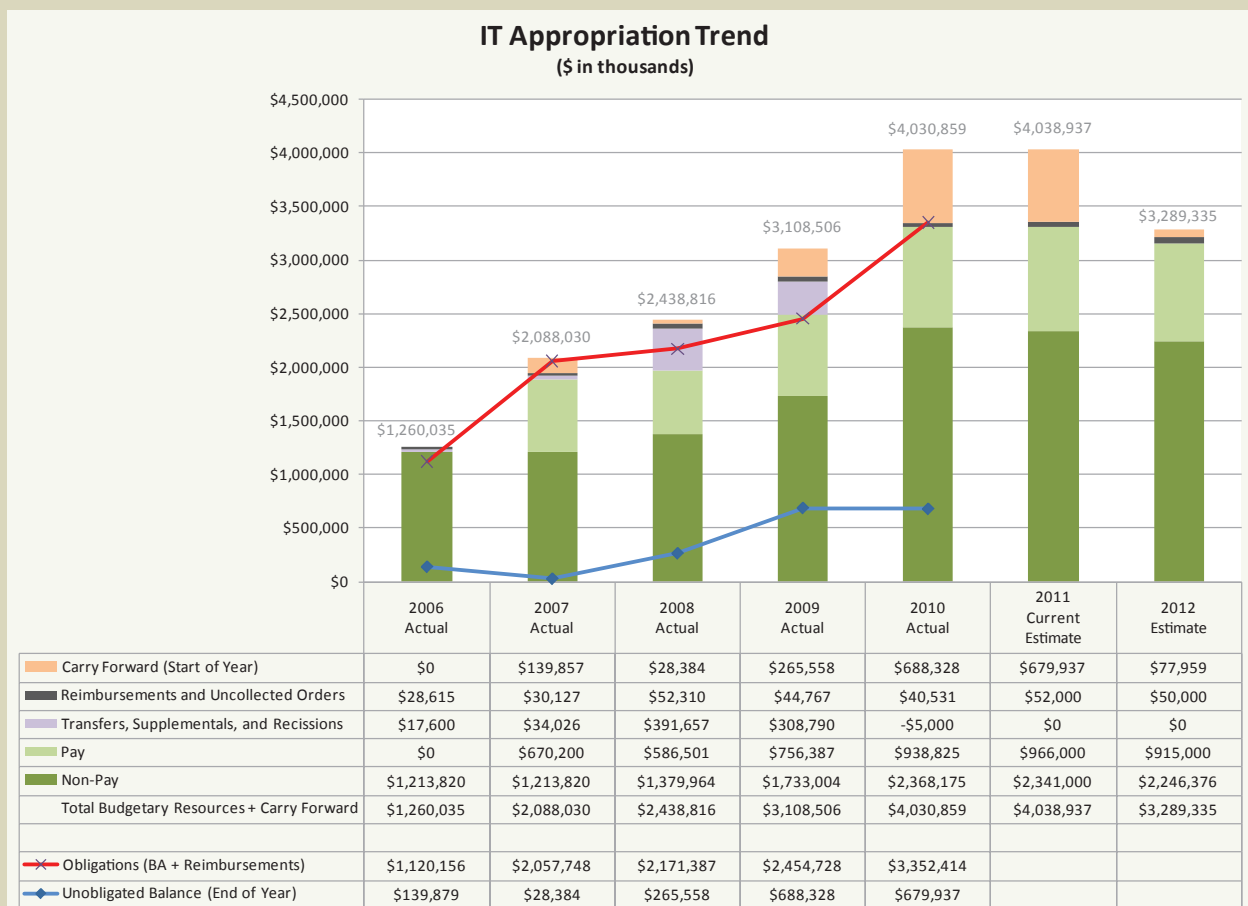
Section III.

Financial Summary

A. Summary

VA's consolidated IT appropriation is unique among large Federal departments and agencies. A single CIO — supported by a senior leadership governance structure — enacts Department-wide priorities in both budget development and execution. In recent years, the steady rise in the OI&T budget reflects the growing need for added support to the VA business lines with more responsive systems and additional staff. Our reviews of programs via the PMAS process identified areas for improved resource allocation and delivery schedules. VA is rapidly demolishing the legacy "silo" technology structure and rebuilding with a single vision — lifetime support for the Veteran. In short, with strong oversight, balanced resources, and effective processes, VA will deliver world-class, quality services to the Veteran that is both accurate and timely.

B. IT Appropriation Trend

IT Appropriation Trend
($ in thousands)

	2006 Actual	2007 Actual	2008 Actual	2009 Actual	2010 Actual	2011 Current Estimate	2012 Estimate
Carry Forward (Start of Year)	$0	$139,857	$28,384	$265,558	$688,328	$679,937	$77,959
Reimbursements and Uncollected Orders	$28,615	$30,127	$52,310	$44,767	$40,531	$52,000	$50,000
Transfers, Supplementals, and Recissions	$17,600	$34,026	$391,657	$308,790	-$5,000	$0	$0
Pay	$0	$670,200	$586,501	$756,387	$938,825	$966,000	$915,000
Non-Pay	$1,213,820	$1,213,820	$1,379,964	$1,733,004	$2,368,175	$2,341,000	$2,246,376
Total Budgetary Resources + Carry Forward	$1,260,035	$2,088,030	$2,438,816	$3,108,506	$4,030,859	$4,038,937	$3,289,335
Obligations (BA + Reimbursements)	$1,120,156	$2,057,748	$2,171,387	$2,454,728	$3,352,414		
Unobligated Balance (End of Year)	$139,879	$28,384	$265,558	$688,328	$679,937		

'Total Budgetary Resources + Carry Forward' may not equal 'Obligations' plus 'Unobligated Balance (End of Year)' due to expired funds and changes in uncollected orders.

The 2008 'Transfer, Supplementals, and Recissions' line includes the $371,657 transfer from VHA to support IT initiatives and the $20,000 Chapter 33 Supplemental (P.L. 110-252).

The 2009 'Transfer, Supplementals, and Recissions' line includes the $258,690 transfer from VHA /VBA-GOE to support staffing and the $50,100 ARRA (P.L. 111-5).

Data Source: 'Information and Technology Systems Appropriation/Obligations' tables from VA President's Budget Submissions (BY 2008 through BY 2012)
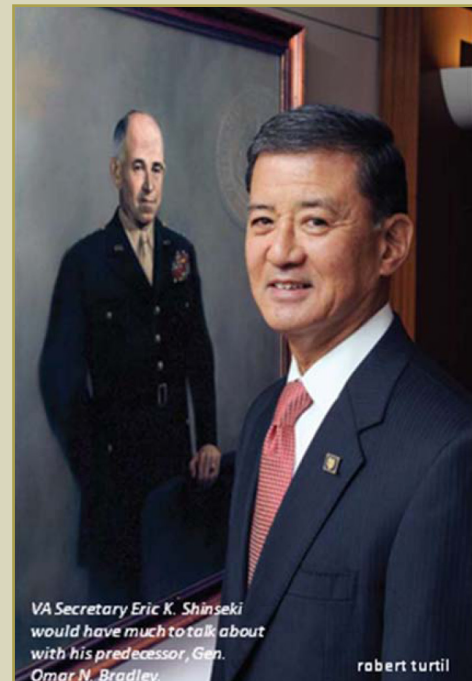
Section IV.

Communication

A. Introduction

Communicating remains one of the most important components for us to successfully support a Department-wide transformation. The goal of the CIO is that everyone is and remains cognizant that we must transform as it is nearly impossible for the Department to transform unless OI&T transforms. Because transformation occurs across numerous spectrums we must use a variety of methods to communicate throughout the Department – from the CIO to all OI&T employees in the field and across all Departments throughout VA. You might ask or wonder what is transformation? Transformation is where Veterans receive benefits and services they earned and deserve. It is simply impossible to use old business practices to achieve technology based solutions of today. In 1945 Omar Bradley served as the Secretary of the Veterans Administration and faced many challenges, which parallel our challenges of today; primarily a backlog of communication requests from Veterans. General Bradley had to transform the Department quickly to meet the growing demand of requests and the almost instant surge of the Veteran population from nearly 5 million to more than 17 million. As you can see throughout this document we are focused on 16 major initiatives necessary to transform the Department in order to provide Veterans the benefits and services they earned and deserve.

VA Secretary Eric K. Shinseki would have much to talk about with his predecessor, Gen. Omar N. Bradley.   robert turtil

B. CIO Messages

CIO messages are intended to deliver important Departmental information to a widespread audience quickly. Topics range from identification of important strategic initiatives to educating our employees are new evolving technology. You can locate recent CIO messages on the Intranet Website located at **http://vaww.oit.va.gov/CIO_Messages.asp**. Here is a brief summary of messages covered during 2010.

- June 2010: CIO identified the Departments 13 major initiatives along with the business sponsor and program manager.

- July 2010: Description of the Rigor and Performance (RAP) report and the importance of RAP in tracking operational metrics.

- August 2010: Description and purpose of the FOIA Website.

C. CIO Executive Shadow Program

The CIO Shadow program spawned from the desire of the CIO to understand the challenges and opportunities our CIOs in the field are experiencing. This program is a clear example of an intuitive and insightful approach to the challenge of departing Washington, D.C. for any extended periods of time. Mr. Baker felt "if I can't get out to the field, then we're going to have to bring the field in here." In essence CIOs from throughout the field are selected to shadow Mr. Baker for two weeks, where they are fully immersed into all of the daily actions Mr. Baker performs. This opportunity presents a large amount of reciprocating value – the CIO gains an enhanced perspective of the field and our field CIOs gain an understanding for the challenges associated with the Department.

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D. *VAnguard* Magazine

VAnguard magazine serves the interests of the entire Department along with our Veteran population, industry partners, and State and Federal Governments. The Office of Information and Technology is featured throughout the year in this important publication and identifies how we are helping to transform the Department.

    You can view the latest edition of *VAnguard* along with archived copies at **http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/vanguard.asp**.
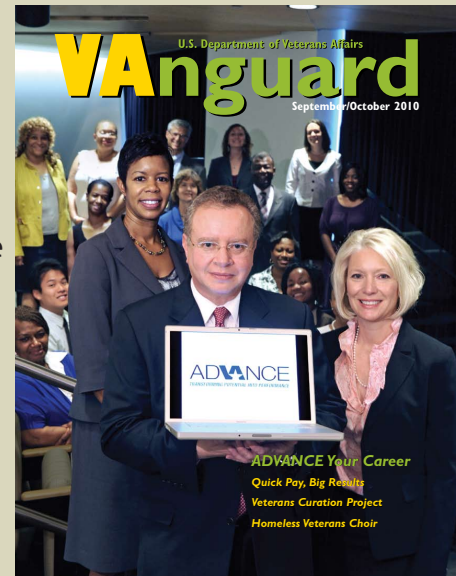
E. OI&T Intranet and Internet

Our Intranet site offers links to the organizations within OI&T along with an up-to-date description of the CIO priorities, various communications links, the IT dashboard, PMAS, and numerous quick links. This site is very useful for our employees to access important data, which facilitates communications amongst all OI&T employees and in communicating our current actions to the entire Department.

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   The Internet site provides direct links to various OI&T sites and offers a myriad of federal reports and useful information thus complying with the transparency goals and objectives of our Administration.

2010 CIO Annual Report Point of Contact, Office of Quality & Performance (005X)